

UN DU LWG Meeting November 11th, 2003 Western Park Vernal, Utah

Attendees: 57 attendees representing various state and federal agencies as well as private landowners and businesses.

Meeting started at 7:35 PM 43 people present

Discussion Subject Sage-grouse general information:

Dean Mitchell gave his presentation on sage-grouse where he discussed the natural history, biology, status and history in Utah and other Western States. He discussed working groups and their purposes with regards to conservation plans.

Questions:

Questions were asked by the group with regards to:

—The county has re-written their general plan to provide mitigation banks to help address the issues of gas exploration. Only 15% of Uintah County is private land. All Federal management agencies are interested in supporting the county with their mitigation issues. The county wants to coordinate efforts with this group to keep us involved.

—What options does the USFWS have to address the petitions? Dean there are three different rulings they could come up with. Warranted, warranted but precluded or not warranted for listing. Then it goes through a 12-month review process.

—What effect do predators have on the bird? Birds of prey, foxes etc.?

—How has the initial introduction of the bird in the Strawberry Valley gone? What about reintroductions out here, can it be done?

—Why are we hunting sage-grouse if they have been petitioned to be listed? Dean indicated that in those areas where we are currently hunting there is enough birds that we are not affecting the local population.

Discussion Subject What we know about sage-grouse in the Uinta Basin

USU work on sage-grouse in the area. USU assisted BLM in compiling data. Literature review, visited all known leks on BLM ground (130) both historic and active leks. At all these leks habitat data, photos, and satellite technology was used to show lek locations and given to the BLM. USU found that the sites were within the parameters as set by Conelly et al. No work on FS or BLM lands were completed.

Next meeting

Is scheduled for January 29th from 1–5 PM in county court house somewhere. Boyd is still arranging a room.

Assignments

Volunteers to represent various groups.

Brian Maxfield UDWR, Boyd Kitchen-Todd Black-Troy Cooper Extension, Bill Strough USFS, Rich Etchburger Education, Scott Chew Blue Mountain landowners, Raleen Searle—John Busch Questar, Roland Searle Diamond Mountain landowners, Scott Chamberlain SITLA